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A

MIRROR

FOR

PRINCES,

&c. &c.

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A

MIRROR FOR PRINCES,

IN A

LETTER

TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE

PRINCE OF WALES.

By HAMPDEN.

In commune jubes ſi quid, cenſeſve tenendum
Primus juſſa ſubi : Tunc obſervantior æqui
Fit Popu'us ; nec ferre negat, cum viderit ipſum
Auctorem parere ſibi. Componitur orbis
Regis ad exemplum : Nec ſic inflectere ſenſus
Humanos Edicta valent, ac Vita regentis.

CLAUDIAN : de 4to. Conſulat : Honorii.

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TO THE

PRINCE OF WALES.

SIR,

IN the hour of national adverſity, we involuntarily apply for protection to thoſe whom chance, cuſtom, or our own conſent, ſhall have conſtituted our governors.—If there is any time in which the relative ſituations and dependencies of the governors and the governed are peculiarly felt and underſtood, it is in ſuch a ſeaſon of general calamity—It is then we anxiouſly preſs forward to thoſe Authorities in whom we have veſted the faireſt privileges of our nature.—The com-

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mon principles of moral juſtice teach us that it is but reaſonable to expect ſome return from thoſe to whom nothing has been denied—It is from this idea we lay aſide the humble air of ſupplication, and approach you with the ingenuous confidence of friendſhip.—It will be a conſolation to us to learn that our calamities proceed from any cauſe rather than from the hand of thoſe whom we have cheerfully and indulgently foſtered—We ſhould be unwilling to diſcover an enemy where we hoped and believed we poſſeſſed a friend.—Gratifying will it be to us to be convinced, that the ſeeds of our bounty have not been ſcattered upon barren and inhoſpitable ground: that we may not have to repeat the Athenian reproach to the rivals and enemies of their country;

Αλλ ατεχνως καλα του Αισωπε μυθον, εν ᾗ αλωπηξ
προσ ται λεοντα ειπε, και ὅ εισ Λακεδαμονα
νομισμασ
εισιοντοσ μεντα ιχνη τα εκεισε τετραμμενα
δηλα, εξιοντοσ εδαμη αν τισ ἰδοι.*

The

* That, according to the Fable of Æſop, where the Fox addreſſes the Lion, we may trace the ſteps of the good things

The moment, Sir, is arrived when thoſe to whom power and authority have been delegated ought to aſſure us of their ability and inclination to protect us.—It is now we may exclaim to our rulers of every deſcription; "Our calamities are no longer to be con-" cealed.—Knowing a good government to " be neceſſary for the happineſs of the peo-" ple, and the happineſs of the people to be " the only true principle on which a good " government can be founded, we have ſur-" veyed our conſtitution with the fondeſt " admiration—We have intruſted it to your " hands as a ſacred depoſit in which every " thing deareſt to us was involved—How " ſincerely we have ſubmitted to the high " authority you have derived from ſo import-" ant a charge, our conduct has manifeſted—" You have promulgated Laws and we have " obeyed them; you have demanded money " to an enormous amount and we have grant-" ed it; you have rioted in luxury and we " have forborne to envy you; you have been

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things going into Lacedemon, but cannot d ſcover any marks of their return.

PLATO Alcibia. Prim.

" amuſed with diſtinctions, and we have be-
" held them with ſilent indifference. —
" Having received your wages, we doubt
" not you have performed your ſervice, at
" leaſt, we have a right to expect it.—When
" misfortunes oppreſs us, we naturally fly
" for a refuge to the guardians of that con-
" ſtitution which was formed for the pre-
" ſervation of our happineſs—we ſhould be
" loath to ſuſpect that you have abuſed the
" confidence we have repoſed in you, and
" that you have returned our kindneſs with
" ingratitude ; that you have been negligent
" and inattentive to our welfare.—The op-
" portunity is now offered you of aſſerting
" your integrity, and proving to us that you
" have not taken advantage of our honeſt
" and unſuſpecting attachment—But the ſim-
" plicity of our nature may perhaps encou-
" rage us to be too ſanguine. Let us, for a
" moment, repreſs the ardour of our hopes,
" let us cautiouſly examine in whom we may
" confide, let us learn to diſtinguiſh thoſe
" who have conſcientiouſly performed their
" truſt, from the men whom we are in future

" to

" to regard as the abandoned and unprinci-
" pled betrayers of our country."—Such, Sir, it may be eaſily conceived are at this moment the ſentiments of the people of England.

Amidſt the band of our Legiſlators, you, Sir, ſtand in too conſpicuous a ſituation not immediately to arreſt our attention,* Ἐχδηλοσμέϛα πᾶσιν, as a Peer of Parliament, a privy Counſellor, heir apparent to the Crown, the the firſt born amongſt the adopted children of the people, you are irreſiſtibly forced upon our notice.—

You muſt forgive me, Sir, if in the following pages, the uncourtly ſimplicity of my phraſe, the unſtudied plainneſs of my addreſs ſhall be grating to an ear too long habituated to the ſoothing, but treacherous modulations of flattery.—If I boaſt not the elegant characteriſtics of the Great, I may hope for an equal exemption from their vices.—Though I ſhall

* Conſpicuous amongſt the many.
HOMER'S ILIAD.

I ſhall forbear wantonly to inſult. I come not as the miniſter of your pleaſure—my praiſes where you deſerve them, ſhall be without adulation, my remonſtrances without bitterneſs.

That I may omit no circumſtance tending to illuſtrate your character, I ſhall commence my enquiries from the earlieſt period of your life.—Though you cannot explain with the viſionary Glendower,

——At my nativity
The front of Heaven was full of fiery ſhapes
Of living Creſſets, and at my birth
The frame and the foundation of the world
Shak'd like a coward.—

Your entrance into the world was accompanied by circumſtances, if of a more humble, certainly of a more gratifying nature to your future feelings.—At your birth the voice of honeſt joy vibrated on every tongue, every heart beat with an emotion of the livelieſt pleaſure.—It was ſomething of a paren-

parental feeling that animated the people of England; as your political fathers, they fondled you as the favourite child of the ſtate and they indulged (for *you cannot* Sir, be ignorant of the proverbial partiality of parents,) the moſt enthuſiaſtic hopes of your future virtues.—I envy you Sir, the exquiſite ſatisfaction you muſt experience, if you have the conſciouſneſs of having realized theſe hopes, of having by the purity of your life, requited their affectionate kindneſs.—Your education was a ſubject of too great importance, to be haſtily or negligently conſidered. —Your ſuppoſed natural goodneſs of diſpoſition was to be ſtrengthened by every precaution human ſagacity could deviſe.—To arouſe you to wiſdom and to virtue, by affording you ſuch means of acquiring them, as ſhould render your deficiency in either diſgraceful, was the ſpirit that animated the whole ſyſtem of your education. Your preceptors were men of great and enlightened minds—you imbibed learning from its pureſt and moſt captivating ſource—He muſt indeed be dull of heart to whom inſtruction could fail to be de-

delightful when flowing from the mouth of the elegant and engaging Hurd—Nor were the leſſons of morality leſs advantageouſly recommended—The virtuous precepts you received from your inſtructors were inforced by the example you daily witneſſed of their practice in the domeſtic circle of your royal Parents—Such, Sir, were the advantages that attended you from the firſt dawning of your ideas, and our hopes were proportionally great—We heard with delight the progreſs of your ſtudies, and we dwelt with rapture on the encomiums paſſed on your underſtanding, your claſſical taſte, your numerous and encreaſing virtues; your preceptors (who with all their merits were courtiers indeed) might be allowed a little exaggeration in favour of their princely pupil.—But courtly politeneſs cannot exceed the bounds of popular enthuſiaſm—Had praiſes, in a tenfold greater degree been laviſhed on your merits, in the fullneſs of our hearts we ſhould have given them our ſincereſt belief. Here, Sir, let us pauſe awhile, let us awefully ponder on the inpenetrable uncertainty that envelopes the diſpoſition of human

human affairs.—Let thoſe who repoſe in the ſecurity of worldly advantages; who from the pinnacle of their pride, look inſultingly down on the unenlightened multitude, check their pharaſaical contempt and learn the leſſon of humility—Let the diſciples of virtue, however lowly, however ſtruggling againſt the temporary tide of adverſity, rejoice in that purity without whoſe benignant influence, the ſplendor of birth, the graces of education, the magnificence of power become degraded and deſpiſed.

Pardon, Sir this involuntary digreſſion—I will return while yet I am able, to the contemplation of your character ſtill beaming with the luſtre of youthful innocence, ſpotleſs and unſullied—We now behold you entering upon the great and active Theatre of life with a mingled ſenſation of anxiety and delight—The graces of your perſon, the manly animation of your countenance, the affability of your manner,* the charms of

* I may be accuſed of trifling when I enlarge ſo copiouſly on theſe external accompliſhments—but ſuch qualifications are of no

your converſation promiſed the exiſtence of ſtill more ſolid and valuable endowments—We could not ſuppoſe (at leaſt we would not allow ourſelves to ſuppoſe) that the exterior accompliſhments which had ſo faſcinated our attention, were but as treacherous deceptions, by which our honeſt affections were to be enſnared and deluded—We were incapable of ſo ungenerous a ſuſpicion—If indeed a ſlight ſhade of inquietude tinctured our ſatisfaction, it ſprung from the fears natural to thoſe who are accuſtomed to obſerve the dangerous volatility of youth.—We tremblingly prayed that you might not want the reſolution to reſiſt the hoſt of temptations we knew would encircle you, e'er you had well ſtepped beyond the threſhold of your youthful aſylum. But when we remembered the excellence of your education, our diſtruſt was extinguiſhed and we ſurveyed you with a confidence in your virtues

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no ordinary account in the catalogue of princely virtues.—The power of Elizabeth was not a little ſtrengthened, and the affections of her People invigorated by the gracious condeſcenſion and dignified ſweetneſs of her manner, ſo that as Nat. Bacon ſays, "A Courtier might make a better meal from one good look from her, than of a gift from ſome other."

virtues which it muſt have required Herculean labour to have ſhaken.

Think not, Sir, the world ſo ſtoically rigid in its morality, as not to make ſome allowances for the warmth and vivacity of youth —They wiſhed not to freeze the current of your blood e'er it had well begun to flow—It was with pleaſure they heard you acknowledged as "the glaſs of faſhion, the obſerved of all obſervers"—They ſmiled with complacency on the gaiety of your equipages and the expenſive taſte of your apparel—Your occaſional ſacrifices at the ſhrine of Bacchus excited not the indignation of a moment—Your amours, though perhaps not always highly creditable to your taſte, they regarded, but as

Violets in the youth of primy nature;
Sweet but not permanent.

While you ſported on the ſurface of folly they had little apprehenſion for your ſafety—Their partiality was yet undiminiſhed, and you ſtill triumphed over the affections of an admiring

and indulgent people—Your irregularities were mingled with traits of ſomething like goodneſs, of which they were willing to make the moſt—They ſaw your name blazing at the head of benevolent ſubſcriptions and patriotic inſtitutions, and they augured favourably of the excellence of your heart and your attachment to the intereſts of the Country—They ſuſpected you not of deceitful oſtentation—The ſimplicity natural to your years forbade them to ſuppoſe it.

Happy ſhould I feel, Sir, if the proſpect brightened as it expanded—The time was now approaching when thoſe who had blindly dwelt on your imaginary excellence, ſtarting from their dream of ſatisfaction, waked to the bitter ſenſe of your ſhameleſs degradation. They could no longer acknowledge the former idol of their hopes, in the frequenter of riotous clubs, the aſſociate of unprincipled gameſters and mendicant patriots, the dupe of the very refuſe of proſtitution—Your vices had not even the pretenſions of elegance to recommend them—It was mortifying to behold the Heir apparent of the Crown dwindled to a calculator

calculator of chances. The rival of jockies, the needy dependant of jews—For ſuch were the miſerable ſhifts to which your boundleſs extravagance had reduced you.—We have, indeed, ſometimes been diverted from the groveling contemplation of your undignified pleaſures by a convulſive effort of magnificent parade. You were willing, perhaps, to indulge your liberal benefactors, the generous people of England, with a ſight of ſomething for their money—It is with this view, no doubt, you have emerged from the obſcure ſcenes of your paſtime, the intemperate orgies of a tavern, or the ſullen hilarity of a gaming-houſe, and have fluttered the Phœnix of a Birth-day. But I will confeſs to you, Sir, that when on ſuch occaſions our ears have been invaded by encomiums of your princely taſte, when the gorgeous ſplendor of your ſtar or your ſword knot has gratified the admiring multitude, ſome of us have withdrawn ourſelves from the raviſhing ſpectacle. — We fear our Gothic barbarity may be cenſured; but the concentrated ſplendor of the Eaſt would have had but little charm for us when conſidered

as

as a diminution of the ſcanty fruits of the hard and cheerleſs labour of an induſtrious people.—The brilliancy of your diamonds might have dazzled our eyes, but could not have faſcinated our underſtanding—we might have admired the richneſs of your jewels and the taſte of their arrangement, but we ſhould have ſtill remembered the ſource from whence you derived them.—The pomp of the drawing-room could not have effaced from our painful recollection the comfortleſs habitation of the honeſt artificer and oppreſſed peaſant—we ſhould have ill-reſtrained an emotion of generous indignation in beholding one man tricked out with a coſtly profuſion capable of affording happineſs to ſtarving thouſands, at leaſt as virtuous as himſelf.

I declaim not, Sir, againſt the decent magnificence of Royalty—I am alarmed only by its exceſſes. That the Executive Power ſhould be attended with a certain degree of Pomp ſeems to have been one of the eſtabliſhed data in the government of every country. It is a tacit acknowledgement of human

human frailty, a compromiſe between vice on the one hand and ignorance on the other, a painted veil to ſcreen the irregularities and profligacy of power and to amuſe and gratify the ignorance of the people.—'Till that period ſhall arrive when Truth and Juſtice ſhall be loved merely for themſelves, 'till good Laws ſhall ceaſe to be degraded by the unworthineſs of thoſe appointed to adminiſter them, 'till the people ſhall be ſo inſtructed as to underſtand and value what is right, it is a deception not to be diſpenſed with.

Your friends, or your *panegyriſts*, (for I ſhall have occaſion to prove in the following pages that they are by no means ſynonymous terms) have dwelt with much ſeeming ſatisfaction on the outſet of your political career; the active part you took in oppoſing the meaſures of miniſters, in checking the prerogative of the Crown that was ſome time to be your own, evinced an independency of ſpirit very grateful to the feelings of the country—there were ſome, perhaps, the icy coldneſs of whoſe cautious prudence was not

to

to be melted by the warm breathings of Liberty, however they might admire your magnanimity, thought leſs highly of your wiſdom in endeavouring to leſſen the value of your inheritance—*They* reaſoned upon better grounds, who feeling for the cauſe of Liberty alone, beheld with the ſincereſt pain your union with the forces of oppoſition—They regarded it as an unnatural compact—The ſtern ſimplicity of independence was but an ill-ſorted companion for the voluptuous deſcendant of Royalty.—Characters ſo oppoſite could not long be united without one ſide partaking of the prevailing influence of the other. Our confidence in you, Sir, was too much diſturbed to encourage us to believe that you would abandon the meretricious allurements of pleaſure for the ſober embraces of virtue, We dreaded the influence of the dazzling attractions annexed to your ſtation over the honeſt minds of your new aſſociates.—We dreaded that by diverting the polluted ſtream of courtly corruption into the pure channel of public virtue, you would poiſon the ſources of our political

ſecurity

ſecurity—For it was at that time, Sir, the people of England confided in a virtuous oppoſition as inſeparable from the ſafety of the Conſtitution—that the fears of your deadly influence were not entirely unfounded, the event has too well proved.—As the head of a Party, your conduct ſtamped a character on the whole.—Thoſe who did not actually mingle in your effeminate debaucheries, partook of ſomething of the odium. — The oppoſition by ceaſing to be virtuous, ceaſed to be reſpectable—it was no further to be truſted by the people—indeed their intereſts ſeemed to be the laſt object of conſideration. It was no longer the cauſe of the people combating the encreaſing influence of the Crown, it was the intrigues of Carlton Houſe counteracting the intrigues of St. James's. Were I aſked to perſonify the Genius of the Party at that time I ſhould ſay we had a thing preſented to us, a bloated fantaſtical figure with a dice-box in one-hand, a goblet in the other, her cheeks flaming with drunkenneſs, the contending paſſions of Avarice and Luſt glaring fiercely in her bewildered

eyes; the Cap of Liberty, indeed, ſtill half placed and tottering on her head; and Magna Charta torn and trodden at her feet.

The puppet-ſhew of patriotiſm was ſtill exhibited to us, but we paſſed ſilently and ſcornfully by.—The zealous enthuſiaſm diſplayed at your convivial meetings, communicated not itſelf to the dejected breaſts of the people.—The cauſe of liberty became degraded whilſt ſerving but to give a zeſt to your wine, and evaporating in the quaintneſs of a toaſt.

Whilſt ſurveying you as the head of a once reſpectable oppoſition, the memory of your paternal Grandfather forcibly occurs to me.—Like you, Sir, he oppoſed the Adminiſtration of his time,—but here the ſimilitude is concluded: He added dignity and reſpect where you have diſſeminated diſgrace. Accuſe me not, Sir, of an invidious diſtinction if I dwell with a longing ſatisfaction on the conduct of this amiable man. With abilities neither great by nature nor much improved

proved by education, he conducted himself with a propriety your most daring panegyrists would not be hardy enough to ascribe to you.—Unable, perhaps, to reason upon duties in the Abstract, he, nevertheless, practised them in the detail.—With a mind little calculated to develope the intricacies of political science, the goodness of his heart instinctively led him to embrace certain great leading principles, which Reason also whispered him were right. Gentle by nature, and anxious to promote the happiness of mankind, he had sagacity enough to discover that no means could be better suited to so virtuous an end than the evincing his attachment to the cause of liberty; and in this pursuit he was uniformly constant to the hour of his death. It was this Prince of Wales who, when the scantiness of his income rather than his shameless extravagance, had involved him in pecuniary distress, and who, when he was urged to make an application to Parliament, virtuously exclaimed "that he would suffer any hardship rather than add to the burthens of an honest and indulgent people."

The country was not then inſulted with the mock parade of retrenchment, whilſt the ſecret ſprings of expence were ſtill continuing to move with unabated power.

It was this Prince of Wales who, retiring not with ſullen diſdain and contumelious reproaches, but with the cheerful conſciouſneſs of virtue, carried with him the eſteem and confidence of the nation. They ſaw his little court, glorious in its humility, affording an aſylum to genius, to learning, and to virtue. The Egalitès and the Barrymores of the age gave way to the more diſtinguiſhed names of a Mallet, a Thompſon, and a Glover. The verſatility of your character, your comprehenſive ſcale of action from the meridian of the court to the mephitic atmoſphere of the gaming-houſe, render you an admirable ſubject for the ſpeculations of the comparative hiſtorian. Some, perhaps, more pedantically malignant than myſelf, would fancy they could recognize in your conduct the taſteleſs debaucheries of a Clodius; the groſſer ſenſualities of a Tarquin; and the ſtupid

ſtupid buffoonery of a Nero. But I ſpare you, Sir, the unmerited mortification of ſuch degrading compariſons. I will for a moment forget what you are, and endeavour to explain to you what you are not: whilſt I deteſt the fallacy of a very popular prejudice, evidently of a dangerous tendency, and which ſeems not a little to have ſanctioned, in your own opinion, the various exceſſes of your life.—Your advocates, who, though aſhamed of your conduct, ſtill were unwilling to abandon you to general diſgrace, have often attempted to ſhelter your irregularities under a reſemblance, they affected to ſay, you bore to a perſon of high celebrity in the annals of this country.—The name of HENRY V. cannot but be familiar to you. The heterogeneous character of this extraordinary man renders him a moſt inſinuating and dangerous object of imitation. He was, in an eminent degree, an inſtance of the "*Exemplar vitiis imitabile*," as expreſſed by HORACE, ſo ſeductive to the indiſcriminating minds of youth.—Hiſtory has rarely preſented to us a perſon on whom virtue

vice have been ſo peculiary blended. It is by ſuch characters even the cautious ſeverity of wiſdom is beguiled of its frown, and involuntarily ſoothed into an approbation of the moſt undignified follies:—It is thus the odium excited by Henry's propenſities to illiberal pleaſures, has been forgotten in the admiration of his princely heroiſm. Such, Sir, is the man you would be thought to reſemble; for you have not eſcaped the inſidious flattery of thoſe who, whilſt they found a ſimilarity in your early vices, hoped, or pretended to hope, for an equal participation of virtue. If he really be the model you have aſpired to equal, we cannot give you much credit for the clumſy imitation:—We ſtart at the rude, miſhapen, and imperfect outline; but look in vain for the maſterly touches, the bewitching graces, the bold and expreſſive beauties of the ſplendid original. Like Henry, Sir, you have had your Falſtaffs, your Bandolphs, and your Piſtols, leſs witty, perhaps, than the joyous ſpirits of Eaſtcheap, but of lives equally depraved and immoral:—Even in the choice of your companions, where you

you approach neareſt to the captivating Henry, we are unwillingly obliged to confeſs your inferiority. Amidſt the diſorderly ſtupidity, the taſteleſs abſurdities that characteriſe your daily feſtivities, we diſcover none of thoſe ſprightly ſallies, thoſe irreſiſtible flaſhes of humour that were wont to enliven the revels of the hero of Agincourt.—Should there be any "prickt to it by fooliſh honeſty and love," ſo miſtakenly kind as to keep alive a compariſon which, however plauſible in the infancy of your exceſſes, muſt now riſe up to whelm you in confuſion, let ſuch men remember, that the early youth of Henry was diſtinguiſhed by a firm and ardent attention to the duties of his ſituation: that it was not 'till the jealouſy of his father had excluded him from the proper exerciſe of his active talents, that he ſought employment in the outrages of intemperate pleaſure.—Let them remember with what ſplendour he at intervals emerged from the clouds of impurity that encircled him: that he lived to realize the hopes of an admiring nation—hopes not haſtily formed upon vague

and

and ill-adapted compariſons, but inſpired and invigorated by thoſe rays of virtue which ſo frequently burſt from the general darkneſs of his conduct. Let them remember that, with a mind irritated by the fatigues and horrors of an hazardous warfare, he diſdained not the tenderneſſes of pure and honourable love; and (which, Sir, may a little excite your aſtoniſhment) that the mild and affectionate duties of an huſband and a father were not forgotten in the turbulent avocations of the Hero. Laſtly, Sir, let your advocates remember that, at a period of life, not more advanced than that to which you have arrived, and in which you now ſtand before us a cauſe of mourning to the country,

"*Wherein thou lieſt in reputation ſick,*"

the illuſtrious Henry terminated a reign of the moſt dazzling glory.

Praiſe in the ſervice of ſuch men, ceaſes to be proſtitution—it becomes a duty—it partakes of the divine qualities attributed to Mercy—

"It

"It bleſſeth him that gives and him that takes."

Every thing which in its performance is a virtue, is proportionably in its violation a crime. What then ſhall I ſay to the fallen mind of that man who hails you as the "pride and glory of the nation?*" Little cauſe as you have given me to awaken my compaſſion, I really pity you, Sir, the mortification you muſt feel from ſuch humiliating flattery. If the circumſtance could fail to be attended with the keen and agonizing reflection of what you once were and what you now are, I could imagine you laughing at your ſublime panegyriſt:—Yes, Sir, you laugh in very bitterneſs, you deride him in the fulneſs of your ſcorn.

Shall we ſuffer our honeſt indignation to cry aloud, or ſhall we ſilently give vent to our tears, when we behold a man, once foremoſt in the ranks of liberty, who has animated us by his zeal, and inſtructed us by

* See Mr. Burke's Letters.

his wiſdom; on whoſe eloquence we have hung with rapture; who has ſtrewed the paths of Philoſophy with roſes, degraded to the fawning and penſioned advocate of Royalty. At that period of life when the intemperance of paſſion, the reſentments of injuries uſually ceaſe to be remembered; when they ſubſide into univerſal benevolence; when the mind dwells with anguiſh on the ſlighteſt wrong it may have occaſioned, and ſighs for inſtant reparation; at ſuch a moment ſhall we endure to behold him tottering on the verge of annihilation, with his laſt breath kindling the expiring embers of that flame that has already deſolated Europe? Is the furious bigotry of opinion to be glutted and appeaſed but with the blood of thouſands and tens of thouſands? Have we recoiled with a mixture of horrour and unbelief at the reported ferocity of the dying imprecations of the *Iroquois* and *Illenois*; and ſhall we not ſhudder at the barbarous fanaticiſm of the viſionary politician who, in the laſt convulſive ſtruggle of his diſordered being, aims a deadly blow at the happineſs of mankind

and

and who, like Sampſon, buries himſelf in the bloody trophies of his reſiſtleſs ſtrength.

Pardon me, Sir, for having quitted you ſo long.—I return to condole with you on the ſhame that muſt overwhelm you whilſt you receive the diſgraceful flattery of this "fooliſh fond old man."—I leave him to admire, with phrenzied delight, the high-wrought decorations, the luxuriant foliage of the *Capitals* of "the *Corinthian pillars* of the *State:*"—Mine be the humbler yet more valuable employment, by cleanſing the deceitful rubbiſh heaped around their baſe, to detect their latent weakneſs, and ſecure their trembling foundations.

Not to fatigue myſelf with the detail of circumſtances comparatively of ſmall importance when oppoſed to thoſe I am about to notice, I ſhall paſs over in ſilent diſdain the petty enumeration of your unmanly pleaſures. Let the grooms of Newmarket, the ſcene-ſhifters of the Theatres, the menials of thoſe in whoſe polluted embraces you have

wantoned, glory in having witneſſed the paſtimes of degraded Royalty:—Let them enjoy the coarſe ſneer;—let them brood over the wretched conſolation of beholding the Prince reduced to a level with themſelves:—your example may be of ſervice to them:—their minds, un-educated as they are, may yet comprehend, from the view of your humiliating ſtate, that nothing is really reſpectable but Virtue.

The year 1788 was diſtinguiſhed by an event which no one regarded with indifference, however variouſly it might have affected the feelings of individuals. Out of the ſphere of politics, (if ſuch an event indeed could be ſeparated from political conſiderations) one ſentiment of general ſorrow operated on every breaſt. Awfully and ſilently as the ſpeculative philanthropiſt might weep over the calamities incident to humanity, or ponder on the inſtability of earthly greatneſs, far different were the vehement emotions that convulſed the political world on this important occaſion

" ——— *an univerſal hubbub wild,*
Of ſtunning ſounds and voices all confuſed."
PAR. LOST.

Never was a political conteſt conducted with more indecent and illiberal warmth. It was now, Sir, that the maſk was entirely removed from the party of which you profeſſed to be at the head. The intemperate eagerneſs with which they graſped at the tottering crown of their amiable and unhappy Sovereign, the ferocious ſmile of exultation that ſullenly gleamed amidſt the tears they affected to ſhed for his miſery, told us but too plainly that with them patriotiſm had ſerved but as the cloak of diſappointed ambition; that their former energy in the cauſe of the people was without ſincerity, as their preſent avidity of power was without decency, without principle. To thoſe who could reſtrain their ſorrowful indignation, it muſt have afforded matter of infinite ridicule to obſerve the aukward inconſiſtency of thoſe men, who had, a few hours before, been loudeſt in the cauſe of liberty; the terror of Miniſters;

Miniſters; the correctors of the Royal prerogative, ſuddenly, as if ſome miſchievous Fairy* had inverted their eye-lids, madly doating on the object of their former diſguſt.—The fidelity of the beſt hearts towards their humiliated Sovereign, trembled in fearful equilibrium. The bulletin of dawning convaleſcence, or returning malady, alternately operated on the doubtful ſcale.

The eager and unqualified expreſſions of attachment you received from a neighbouring kingdom, the inebriate ardor with which they conferred upon you the exerciſe of Royal Authority, flattering as it might be to the ſuperficial concluſions of your vanity, could have occaſioned but trifling exultation in the breaſts of conſiderate politicians of your party.—Uneaſineſs at their own miſerable government; a love of any change inſeparable from every ſtate whoſe vital principles are choaked with corruption, were the motives that actuated

* See Midſummer Night's Dream.

the

the people of Ireland to ſo precipitate a meaſure.—They were prompted by

"*No love of thee or thine.*"

COWPER.

It was not confidence in you, but diſſatisfaction with themſelves: it was the reſtleſs turbulence of diſeaſe rather than the temperate energy of health.

If I am diſpoſed to cenſure your deviation from political decency at this calamitous period, how little lenity can you expect from me when I hear of your ſpurning men at the almoſt irreſiſtible impulſe of natural affection*. The page of hiſtory is, indeed, blotted by the memorials of men who have allowed the ambition of power to triumph over the beſt and tendereſt affections of Na-

* I know not well how to give credit to certain Tales of the viſits of affected condolance and enquiry at W——r having afforded a ſubject for mimickry and raillery in the convivial parties at C——n H——e. For the credit of human nature I hope the aſſertion is falſe—as for myſelf I *cannot* believe it.

ture:

ture: but theſe inſtances are rare, and have occurred in times, comparatively ſpeaking, of imperfect civilization. I bluſh, Sir, to have it recorded that in theſe days of refined and enlightened knowledge, there ſhould have lived a man who, in the petty character of the intriguing politician, was forgetful of the ſacred offices of filial duty: that your aſſociates, needy by their exceſſes, hardened by intemperance, with ambition maddened almoſt to phrenzy by reſtraint, ſhould have violently ruſhed to the banquet, from which they had ſo long been withheld, was no extraordinary occurrence to thoſe who were accuſtomed to reflect on the operations of the human paſſions.——But the hand of Heaven, which had humbled our Sovereign, as your verſatile panegyriſt exultingly exclaimed*, to a ſituation which the meaneſt cottager muſt ſurvey with compaſſionate pity, was ſuddenly ſtretched forth in our defence. The returning health of your father, whom you had ſo

* See Mr. Burke's Speeches on the Regency.

unworthily

unworthily treated, whoſe ſorrows, ſo far from having awakened that ſpirit of humanity that was ſuppoſed to inhabit your breaſt, ſeemed only to have aroufed the moſt intemperate affections, ſhone on our night of diſquiet, and reſtored to us the ſun-ſhine of confidence and peace.—You and your aſſociates ſullenly retired, baffled and confounded, from the inglorious ſtruggle, a memorable example of diſappointed ambition, uncheered by one comfortable reflection, unaccompanied with one ſigh, except from thoſe whoſe temporizing avarice had withdrawn them from the banners of grateful and affectionate loyalty.

Your character, Sir, is marked by too many great and prominent characteriſtics to allow me to waſte much time in elucidating its minutiæ.—I forbear to trifle with the numerous finer ramifications of folly; I wiſh to aim a ſurer blow at its principal and leading branches. The ſubjects of your debts have been ſo forcibly and ſo ably treated by a writer of acknowledged ability, that I forbear to

treſpaſs much on your time in the diſcuſſion of this degrading topic. Twice have we beheld you reduced to a ſtate of the moſt humiliating inſolvency:—we have ſeen you imploring the aſſiſtance of an indignant, yet relenting Parliament in the moſt abject terms:—we have heard your vows of repentance, and your promiſes of reform: and we have lived to ſee thoſe vows and thoſe promiſes violated and forgotten.—We have contemplated, with a ſenſation of pity, your princely dignity virtually ſubjected to all the rude and unmannerly proceſſes of a common bankruptcy. Whilſt the motley group of your creditors poured in their claims to the Commiſſioners appointed to liquidate your debts; whilſt the band of your needy dependents, jewellers, trinket merchants, tavern-keepers, and proſtitutes, thronged unblushingly round your gates, could we have diſcovered, apart from the rapacious crowd, *one* half-retiring, one blushing yet meekly confident individual, whoſe merits or whoſe misfortunes alone had rendered him a claimant on your bounty, a ſentiment of virtuous delight would have tempered

tempered our reſentment, and where we now reluctantly condemn, we ſhould have haſtened to applaud.—But alas! Sir, ſuch items of benevolent indiſcretion are not to be found in the lengthened column of your debts—the gloomy catalogue is compoſed of very different materials:—Every variety of effeminate luxury; the expences of undignified pleaſures; bonds and ſecurities haſtily and profuſely granted as a temporary relief from heavy debts unworthily contracted; immenſe ſums laviſhed to ſupport the exiſtence of the little *ephemera* of nobility, who fluttered in the ſun-ſhine of your favour: ſuch, Sir, were the ingredients of the unſeemly maſs of corruption, which, ſwelling and gathering to a head, burſt into ruin.

There is one circumſtance ſo intimately connected with that part of my ſubject immediately in queſtion, that I cannot avoid noticing it in this place;—I mean, your attachment to a woman on whom, by your attentions, you conferred a conſiderable degree of notorious celebrity:—I uſe this qualifying

expreſſion from a ſenſation of caution inſpired by the myſtery that envelopes the whole of this extraordinary tranſaction. I ſhould be as unwilling to wound the ſuffering delicacy of injured virtue, as I ſhould ſpurn at the idea of reſcuing vice from the ſalutary diſcipline of cenſure; but conjecture would, in this inſtance, be cruel as it is unneceſſary. I ſhudder to tear open wounds but yet imperfectly healed. The object of your former devotion, as ſhe is now removed from the world, is equally inſenſible perhaps to its praiſes and its cenſures.—If her love for you was criminal, ſhe is atoning for her error by a life of humiliating repentance.—If her boſom is free from the remorſeful recollection of a paſſion ſhe was taught perhaps to conſider as virtuous; if ſhe carries with her the applauſes of a pure and unſullied conſcience, ſhe is in the poſſeſſion of that before which the pomp of palaces ſinks into nothing. When conſidering the ſubject as applying ſolely to yourſelf, pardon me, Sir, if I diſmiſs my ſenſitive delicacy.—The queſtion inſtantly reſolves itſelf into this ſimple alternative;

native: *you were her huſband—or you were not.* You are in a dilemma, and, indeed, a very unfortunate one; but as it is my intention to reject every kind of courtly accommodation in the developement of truth, to diſcipline and not to ſoothe you into virtue, I ſhall treat you with unceremonious frankneſs.

That you were actually married to the lady in queſtion according to the laws of this country, that you ſubjected yourſelf to the indiſſoluble ties of a legal engagement, never, I believe, was ſuſpected even by thoſe who beſt knew your impatience of impediments in the gratification of your paſſions.—But, Sir, there are other tribunals to which we are amenable, independent of thoſe eſtabliſhed for the protection of human laws—There is an appeal to Honor; an appeal to Humanity; an appeal to Conſcience.—It is one thing to ſteer cautiouſly within the pale of the written law, and to exclaim with the malignant ſatisfaction of a Shylock—"Is it in the Bond?" But it is another thing to obey

obey the unwritten dictates of that internal ſenſe of virtue, which riſes ſuperior to the fetters of artificial obligation, whoſe nature is too ſubtle to be reducible to rule, and whoſe now ſtill ſmall voice ſhall plead thunder-tongued before the throne of Eternal Juſtice.

Oh Sir, "lay not the flattering unction to your ſoul."—Whatever plauſible and ſophiſtical chicaneries may have been exerted; whatever ingenious ſalvos may have been fabricated; whatever opiates you may have adminiſtered, to lull the conſcience of the object of your affections; however you may have clipped and filed the ordinances of the Church; however you may have half-muttered and mutilated its ceremonies; ſtill, if you allowed the impreſſion to operate on her mind that ſhe was virtually your wife, you are *bonâ fidê* at this moment her huſband.—Your conduct would, in ſuch a caſe, indeed be immaculate to the un-microſcopic eye of the law—but

" ——————— *'tis not ſo above—*
" *There is no ſhuffling: there the action lies*
" *In its true nature.*—" HAMLET.

Should

Should you ſtand acquitted of an offence, of which common charity induces me to ſuppoſe you guiltleſs, it remains that I immediately advert to the only alternative that preſents itſelf:—To plead one error in extenuation of another, is but an humiliating mode of defence; but ſuch as it is I accept it, and will meet you on fair and candid grounds. I take it for granted, that you prudently preferred ſimple concubinage to more ſerious and fatiguing engagements:—ſuch a method of indulging your deſires you perhaps thought, from comparatively reaſoning, would have but few inconveniences:—perfect freedom would not only relieve you from the horrors of enſlaved ſatiety, but would rather prolong the ſeaſon of enjoyment; and when your idol ſhould fail in her attractions, it would be but exerciſing a more than uſual ſhare of your extravagant bounty, and the affair would be quietly diſpoſed of as though it had never been.—Such is the plauſible reaſoningof ſome men who never want an argument to perſuade themſelves of the expediency of any meaſure likely to contribute to their

pleaſure

pleaſure—and I believe, Sir, it was yours—indeed the conſequences have proved it. The Lady has retired from your inconſtant embraces with a quietus of 4000l. a year.—I am almoſt unwilling to ruffle the calm and complacent ſatisfaction you feel whilſt contemplating the facility with which great minds riſe ſuperior to the moſt trying ſituations.—How dexterouſly, with what a ſimple operation have you out-leapt all the barriers of moral obligation;—with what princely compoſure do you change your miſtreſſes; with the ſame eaſe as your ſubjects would change their clothes! How magically, with a ſingle ſtroke of your pen, have you reinſtated yourſelf into the ineſtimable liberty of gratifying unfettered, your next fantaſtic inclination. We could, indeed, ſurvey with admiration the rapid machinery, the exquiſite theatrical effect with which you introduce and convey your puppets from the ſtage: but we are alarmed by the coſtly expence of your apparatus.—For one ſingle movement in the ſcene,

4000l. a year!!!

On

On ſuch a ſubject it becomes me to be ſerious.—As virtue and vice ſeem to have been adopted in the infant ſtate of ſociety, as names for ſuch things as were found to be uſeful or prejudicial to its general or minuter intereſts; and as it appears that the excellence and heinouſneſs of each were eſtimated proportionably as their properties were extenſive, or their ramifications of conſequent good and evil became multiplied, it is the duty of a moraliſt not merely to conſider every action in its ſimple and uncompounded ſenſe, and to look not beyond its nominal definition, but to calculate its moſt diſtant effects, and to examine all its relative bearings on the commom intereſts of mankind — From this conſideration I might be expected not merely to regard the connexion in queſtion ſimply as a criminal indulgence of paſſion, but that I ſhould diſcriminate all the gathering minutiæ of evil.—But I muſt claim an exemption from the utmoſt rigours of my duty, and be allowed to forbear particularizing each accumulated aggravation, whilſt I reſt

ſolely on the laſt ſhameful conſequence of this diſgraceful tranſaction.

That in the moment of univerſal calamity, whilſt we are trembling on the verge of a national bankruptcy, whilſt we are deluged with taxes, little ſhort of total confiſcation; whilſt the hard-earned wages of the poor and induſtrious peaſantry are barely ſufficient to ſupply the common neceſſaries of life, there ſhould live a man who throws the munificent bounty of the nation into the vortex of folly and diſſipation, is a reflexion that calls a tear from the eye of Humanity, and bids the cheek of Juſtice kindle with reſentment. I ſhall, perhaps, be inſultingly told, that every one has the liberty of appropriating his own money;—but beware, Sir, of too haſtily availing yourſelf of the dangerous principle—there is treachery in the poſition—the money you ſquander is the money of the people—it is the fruit of their labour and their bounty:—it is from them you receive it, and it is to them you muſt render an account.—It will, no doubt, awaken your indignation;

dignation; but know, Sir, there is not a poor mechanic who drags out his comfortleſs exiſtence in his miſerable garret, or a menial porter tottering under his burthen in the ſtreets of the metropolis, to whom you are not indebted for ſome ſhare of your ſplendid luxuries.

I will give you pauſe to ruminate on this bitter and unqueſtionable truth.—I will exclaim, in the pathetic language of the humilitated LEAR,

"Take phyſic Pomp;
"Expoſe thyſelf to feel what wretches feel."

And may you, Sir, by reflecting on the miſeries and poverty of two-thirds of your benefactors, learn a better uſe of the bleſſings of proſperity.

I now approach, Sir, the moſt important æra of your life: an æra which, as it opened to us the proſpect of beholding you emanci-

pated from the ſhackles of folly, was hailed with unuſual ſatisfaction.—It was now that the prophetic predictions of your ſome time ſtarting with virtuous ſplendour, were regarded as accompliſhed.—Your inſpired panegyriſts, whom no diſaſtrous omens had ever diſconcerted, were now ſeen in every circle ſwelling with proud and conſcious exultation. You heroically reſolved to be virtuous, and you ſelected as an aſſociate in this amiable purpoſe, one who, whatever might be the pure and exalted pleaſures of an innocent and honorable life, would, by her participation of them, communicate an encreaſing luſtre and a ten-fold ſweetneſs.—Your firſt approaches to virtue were mixed with a little degree of waywardneſs, which did not, however, diſcourage us from hoping to witneſs your complete reformation. Bad and inveterate habits are not conquered in a day; and it could hardly be expected that you ſhould abandon thoſe fantaſtic pleaſures, in whoſe embraces you had wantoned from your youth,

"*Nor caſt one longing-lingering look behind.*"

But

But when the hour arrived that made you the huſband of a lovely, accompliſhed, and virtuous woman, a princeſs and your near relation, it was believed that you and your vices were to be ſeparated for ever.—But, good God, Sir, how ſhall I expreſs to you the univerſal ſenſation of indignant aſtoniſhment, when "not one little month" from the time when, in the face of the World, in the face of Heaven, you pledged yourſelf to love, to honour, and to cheriſh this amiable ſtranger as your wife, we beheld you loſt to ſhame, to virtue, and to humanity, turning coldly from the tender and affectionate offices of an huſband, and rioting in the admiration of faded and antiquated beauty!

What a mournful picture of ſuffering virtue and intriguing profligacy did your family preſent to the eyes of an inſulted nation!—With what compoſure could they behold your Princeſs bathed in her tears, expoſed to the inſolent merriment of her ſervants, whom your

your favor had intoxicated, and your follies had corrupted, hourly compelled to receive the inſidious attentions of a malignant rival, the ſubject of your ſarcaſtic ridicule, the victim of your ſullen ſpleen?—How could they bear to know that ſuch was the ſituation of a woman, whom, with the natural generoſity of Engliſhmen, they had hailed with tranſport, and whoſe happineſs they conſidered as a ſacred depoſit entruſted to their hands?

I become faint and diſpirited whilſt I endeavour to trace the accumulated wickedneſs, the malicious refinements, the endleſs gradations of cruelty, that have been exerciſed on this lovely and unfortunate ſtranger.—No, Sir, it was not enough that your palace was become to her the dungeon of deſpair rather than the abode of domeſtic tranquility, but even the external ſources of comfort, to which ſhe might fly for a momentary conſolation, were poiſoned and corrupted.—Methinks I ſee her turning to the few of her countrywomen whom your policy conde-

ſcended

ſcended to allow to remain about her perſon, and exclaiming

Alas! poor wenches! where are now your fortunes?
Shipwreck'd upon a kingdom where no pity,
No friends, no hope, no kindred weep for me;
Almoſt no grave allowed me.—

HENRY VIII.

The minds of your whole family were to be perverted by your inſidious artifices.—The virtuous Daughter-in-law was treated with cold and unfeeling indifference, whilſt the painted image of diſgrace fluttered in the courtly circle, covered with careſſes—

O ſhame, ſhame, ſhame!!!

But the Royal protection of ſuch indecorum was too feeble to reſiſt the tide of popular reſentment. The people were not to be ſneeringly chilled or haughtily frowned into an obli-

vion

vion of the beſt affections of nature.—They had imbibed their ideas of moral rectitude from other and purer ſources than from the worldly and ſophiſticated codes of Courts. It became neceſſary now, Sir, for the faction that was leagued to deſtroy the happineſs of this unfortunate Princeſs, and againſt whom the bitterneſs of one, though a ſmall part of the community ſeemeed, to encreaſe proportionally with the compaſſion of the other, to adopt at leaſt ſomething like the apppearance of atonement—The countenance of your parents was for a moment withdrawn —a ſcene of pretended indignation immediately ſucceeded: a reform was inſtituted in your houſehold; ſome odious characters were removed becauſe they could no longer be kept, and with the beſt grace you could aſſume, though not without much ſeeming reluctance, you coldly pronounced *A Reconciliation.*

For once in your life, Sir, you ſacrificed a little to appearance—A ſolemn meeting was appointed,

appointed, your weeping and much injured Princeſs met you with looks of affectionate forgiveneſs, and the world believed you to *repent*—But let me not prophane the expreſſion by uſing it on ſo unworthy an occaſion—The temporizing and licentious Commodus repented but to take breath for more inordinate gratifications.

Is it in the formal ceremonies of a ſtate dinner, is it in one day, perhaps in a month ſnatched from your ſecret indulgencies with your former creatures, and freezingly dedicated to ill-counterfeited attentions to your wife, is it in a life of almoſt total ſeparation, in the abborrence of all domeſtic enjoyments, in an hardened indifference to your child, that we are to recognize repentance and reconciliation?

Think not, Sir, that ſo flimſy a veil can conceal this glaring outrage to decency—Where are we to look for thoſe tender attentions, that interchange of ſentiment, that union of pleaſure, that ſympathy of feeling

which in more humble life would be regarded as the inevitable conſequences of a pure and perfect reconciliation?—I know of no Royal exemption from the common feelings of human nature, nor do I know of any princely prerogative in the eſtimating of moral duties. —Your illuſtrious Conſort will feel her injuries as a woman: and as a man your conduct is amenable to the ſtandard of common juſtice.

Theſe are not times, Sir, to trifle with the affections of the people and to diſſipate thoſe rays of ſacred opinion which, to uſe the words of your elegant preceptor "are the real ſtrength as well as the gilding of the Crown."—It is in vain we pour the thunders of eloquence, and level the ordnance of power againſt the accumulating forces of Revolutioniſm; it is in vain we rudely tear the faireſt bloſſoms from the garland of Liberty, if we ſtoop not to apply an antidote to that inſidious poiſon, which creeping to the very vitals of the conſtitution, threatens a ſlow but inevitable death.—He would be regarded as

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an ignorant Empiric, who whilſt endeavouring to ſtrengthen his patient againſt the imaginary approaches of a dangerous diſorder, ſhould ſuffer a latent diſeaſe to rankle in his frame and gather into mortality—If the genius of republicaniſm is abroad, and threatens injury to our conſtitution, let us examine its minuteſt defects, let us diſcover its moſt vulnerable parts; let its breaches be healed and its weakneſſes be ſtrengthened—To hate Republicans let us firſt learn to love our Princes; let Jacobinical vices be oppoſed by Royal virtues. We are now, Sir, in the fifth year of a war, which, for the injuſtice of its origin, the camelion-like diverſity of its object, the blind and obſtinate pertinacity with which it has been conducted, the calamity and bloodſhed with which it has been marked, is unparalleled in the annals of this country.—We have beheld a war in whoſe defence the name of every thing ſacred has been proſtituted to ſtimulate us, to which the richeſt ſtores of our language have been exhauſted, covering us with ſhame and confu-

ſion—It is in vain that our calculators and our ſtateſmen have penetrated the depths of political ſcience, and proved from eſtabliſhed data the ruin of our enemies, it is vain the puny dependants of Miniſters have fatigued us with the frothy declamations of their ſchools, annihilating armies with the lightening of a metaphor and the majeſty of a period—It is in vain the mild ſpirit of Chriſtianity has been goaded to arouſe our mind to the agonizing ſcenes of ſlaughter and deſolation—It is in vain we have been impiouſly told the avenging hand of the Deity was ſtretched out in our defence, that we were the choſen Miniſters of his wrath.—The God we have ſo daringly prophaned, has humbled us to the duſt.

That a new political ſyſtem, ſo deciſive in its operations, plauſible, as it originated in the principles of reaſon, captivating as it adminiſtered to the miſeries of an oppreſſed people, ſhould have excited the jealous ſuſpicions of the continental Courts, is not to

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be wondered at—By governments founded on deluſion and ſupported by terror, the French Revolution could not be regarded with the eye of indifference—The light of Reaſon and Philoſophy burſting through the gloomy caverns of deſpotiſm, whilſt it flaſhed conviction on the ſtubborn minds of the potentates of Europe, rouſed them to a fatal and rancorous reſentment—However local and confined the views of the new reformers might have been in the outlet of the revolution, The oppoſition of Europe, by extending their views, armed their reſolution and invigorated their zeal—It now became the ſacred ſtruggle between Liberty and Deſpotiſm, and the impulſe of enthuſiaſm naturally inſpired by the cauſe of the former, has been irreſiſtible—The fineſt troops, the moſt experienced Generals in the world, have returned baffled and defeated—If the narrow and ungenerous policy of cruſhing a ſtate in the moment of its weakneſs and diſtraction, actuated the Continental powers in ſo early declaring war againſt the Republic of France, they have paid dearly for their error.

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Their oppoſition has conſolidated that ſtupendous political fabric on a foundation which no time will ever be able to ſhake.

If a benevolent and imprudent emotion of pity for a diſtreſſed Sovereign was the ſecret ſpring of this bloody cruſade, let it be known, that war and deſolation are not the proper engines to enforce the mild leſſons of humanity. If principles were to be reſiſted and attacked, it ſhould have been by the only means by which they can be ſucceſsfully oppoſed, by the panoply of reaſon and truth, It is to little purpoſe Kings have fortified their dungeons, and have forged new chains, new implements of oppreſſion: the phantom of opinion, darting athwart the ſullen horizon of Europe, ſhaking ten thouſand meteors from her wings, ſpurns at their impotent controul.

Little as this country might be ſuppoſed to be affected by the terrors of a French Revolution, we did not long eſcape the contagion of Germanic feelings—we ruſhed into the bloody coalition: It is needleſs to trace the

the various artifices, the flimſy pretexts, that were conjured up by the ſtate magicians to afford us a colourable excuſe for plunging us into a diſaſtrous war. However Miniſters may have ſucceeded for a time in aſſociating their own wretched cauſe with that of the Conſtitution; whatever plauſible deluſion they may have practiſed over the honeſt and confiding minds of the country at large, that deluſion is nearly at an end. Though we wake to miſery, it is better than the ſleep of death. I believe, Sir, it is no longer doubted that the ſecret terror of the influence of French principles, a dread of that ſpirit of philoſophical enquiry that is now trying the eſtabliſhments of Europe, were the real and diſguiſed motives that actuated Miniſters to the adoption of this ruinous meaſure. Little as the Conſtitution in its native and original purity has to apprehend from the minuteſt examination, it was not ſo with its abuſes. The encroachments of power, the abominations of office, the diſeaſed debility of the popular and repreſentative part of the Legiſlature, ſhrunk from the keen and ſearching eye of enquiry.—The old ſtate tricks were

now to be exhibited. "The cry of the Conſtitution is in danger," was re-echoed from office to office till the whole nation, like the hares in the fable, trembled at the motion of their own bodies. Leſt we might recover too ſoon from this temporary alarm, a more deſperate game was to be played.—The policy of Cæſar covered his attacks upon Roman liberty by the ſplendid exhibition of beaſts and gladiators. Whilſt treaſon ſkulked within the walls of the Capitol, the Amphitheatres rung with the applauding aſtoniſhment of thouſands.—We have had a more dreadful ſpectacle preſented to us:—the ſenſe of leſſer inconveniences has, indeed, been forgotten in the frightful contemplation of our countrymen periſhing in the field, or feſtering under the blighting mildew of peſtilence.—We have for a moment been ſtartled out of ourſelves; but remember, Sir, the time is approaching when the horrors we deplore will redound on the heads of their authors with a ten-fold vengeance.—Adverſity is the ſchool of wiſdom; and if that ſtupendous cloud that is ſlowly moving

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over our heads, black with gathering deſtruction, forbears this time to burſt and deluge us with ruin, our awakened ſagacity will inſtruct us not haſtily to encounter ſimilar miſeries in future.—It is in ſuch a moment of general diſmay, when we know not to whom to look for protection, that I am anxious to warn you, Sir, of your precarious ſituation. The habits of your undignified life have deprived us of the hope of expecting from you that conſolatiou which, in the hour of danger, a good Prince ought to be able to adminiſter to his people. Alas, Sir, you neither inſpirit us by your virtues, ſoothe us by your affection, nor arm us by your wiſdom.—We have put you in the ſcale, and you are found wanting. Were our views bounded by your preſent ſituation, we ſhould ſit down perhaps in ſilent and mournful diſappointment. But when we reflect that in a few days, a few hours, nay, at the very moment we are thinking of you, the hand of Heaven may have placed you on the throne, we tremble between our duty and our reaſon. Your conduct, Sir, is a national concern. This is

an age when things begin to be valued for what they are, not what they ſeem.

It is in vain we have endeavoured to enlarge our conſtructions of treaſon; that we have fettered ſociety with new ſhackles of authority; that we have exerted our reaſon and our eloquence againſt the new philoſophy, if our doctrines are contradicted by our example. There is a Jacobiniſm more poiſonous, more ſubtle, more deadly, than all that can be collected from the dreams of Theoriſts, or the harangues of Demagogues—it is the Jacobiniſm of Princely vices.

Good God! Sir, what infatuation can have ſo dulled your mind to a ſenſe of the conſequences of your inconſiderate life?—Whilſt the ſpirit of re-publicaniſm ſcowls around our palaces, ſhall you, reeling from your midnight banquet, place in her hand the weapon of deſtruction? If the wiſdom of our anceſtors has entailed upon us the peaceful poſſeſſion of an hereditary and limited monarchy, forbear, Sir, to leſſon

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our confidence in their prudence, and our gratitude for their kindneſs. It is to you, Sir, we look as to a man who, by the future wiſdom of his councils, is to reſtore the palſied proſperity of a once great and flouriſhing kingdom.—It is on you we reſt our hopes, and *dare* not diſappoint them. The Emperor, the father of his people, ceaſed to be acknowledged by the Romans in the effeminate ſon of Caracalla. Have we fought? have we bled? are we poor? are we divided? are we diſgraced? We have ſtill our Conſtitution.—To whom are we to truſt the invaluable treaſure? If the review of a life wiſely and honourably ſpent inſpire you with a virtuous confidence, ſtand forth, Sir, and exclaim to an anxious nation—"*I am the* MAN!"

If you ſhrink, I tremble for the conſequences.

HAMPDEN.

FINIS.

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